IN THE CLAIMS

-- 1. (Currently amended) A memory card for storing data written thereto from an external device, comprising:

a substantially rectangular card body having first and second substantially rectangular surfaces and edges between said surfaces;

terminals provided in the vicinity of one of the edges between said surfaces and on ~~one of~~ said first substantially rectangular ~~surfaces~~ surface for inputting data from or outputting data to said external device;

a storage device disposed in said card body for storing said data inputted from said terminals;

an electric switch located on ~~one of~~ said ~~surfaces~~ first substantially rectangular surface and operable to a state to prevent the data stored in said storage device from being erased; and

a control circuit disposed within said card body and electrically connected between said terminals and said storage device for writing data from an external device to said storage device, for reading out stored data to said terminals from said storage device and for supplying to said terminals a status signal representing the state of said switch;

said switch being disposed proximate said terminals and electrically connected to said control circuit.--

-- 2. (Original) The memory card of claim 1 wherein said switch has a slide member located in a recess disposed on said one surface. --

-- 3. (Original) The memory card of claim 2 wherein said switch is reciprocally movable in a side-to-side manner toward one and away from the other of longitudinal ones of said edges, the state of said switch being determined by the position thereof. --

-- 4. (Original) The memory card of claim 1 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a read status instruction signal from said external device to supply said status signal to said terminals. --

-- 5. (Original) The memory card of claim 4 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a write instruction signal from said external device to write data to said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said write instruction signal. --

-- 6. (Original) The memory card of claim 4 wherein said control circuit is responsive to an erase instruction signal from said external device to erase data stored in said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said erase instruction signal. --

-- 7. (Original) The memory card of claim 4 wherein said data written to said storage device comprises a data file; and wherein said read status instruction signal is supplied prior to writing a data file to or erasing a data file from said storage device. --

-- 8. (Original) The memory card of claim 1 wherein said switch is operable while said memory card is used with said external device. --

-- 9. (Original) The memory card of claim 1 wherein said control circuit receives signals from and transmits signals to said external device in serial form. --

-- 10. (Currently amended) A memory card for storing data written thereto from an external device, comprising:

a substantially rectangular card body having first and second substantially rectangular surfaces and edges between said surfaces;

terminals provided in the vicinity of one of the edges between said surfaces and on ~~one of~~ said first substantially rectangular ~~surfaces~~ surface for inputting data from or outputting data to said external device;

a storage device disposed in said card body for storing said data inputted from said terminals;

~~a~~ an electric switch located on one of the edges between said surfaces and operable to a state to prevent the data stored in said storage device from being erased; and

a control circuit disposed within said card body and electrically connected between said terminals and said storage device for writing data from an external device to said storage device, for reading out stored data to said terminals from said storage device and for supplying to said terminals a status signal representing the state of said switch, said control circuit being responsive to a read status instruction signal from said external device to supply said status signal to said terminals;

and said switch being electrically connected to said control circuit.--

-- 11. (Original) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said switch has a slide member located in a recess disposed on said one edge. --

-- 12. (Canceled) --

-- 13. (Previously presented) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a write instruction signal from said external device to write data to said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said write instruction signal.--

-- 14. (Previously presented) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said control circuit is responsive to an erase instruction signal from said external device to erase data stored in said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said erase instruction signal. --

-- 15. (Previously presented) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said data written to said storage device comprise a data file; and wherein said read status instruction signal is supplied prior to writing a data file to or erasing a data file from said storage device. --

-- 16. (Original) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said switch is operable while said memory card is used with said external device. --

-- 17. (Original) The memory card of claim 10 wherein said control circuit receives data from and transmits data to said external device in serial form. --

-- 18-40. (Cancelled) --

-- 41. (New) A system comprising:

a memory card for storing data written thereto from an external device, including:

a substantially rectangular card body having first and second substantially rectangular surfaces and edges between said surfaces;

terminals provided in the vicinity of one of the edges between said surfaces and on said first substantially rectangular surface for inputting data from or outputting data to said external device;

a storage device disposed in said card body for storing said data inputted from said terminals;

an electric switch located on said first substantially rectangular surface and operable to a state to prevent the data stored in said storage device from being erased; and

a control circuit disposed within said card body and electrically connected between said terminals and said storage device for writing data from an external device to said storage device, for reading out stored data to said terminals from said storage device and for supplying to said terminals a status signal representing the state of said switch;

said switch being disposed proximate said terminals and electrically connected to said control circuit; and

host apparatus for receiving and communicating with said memory card, said host apparatus including:

terminals for transmitting signals to and reading this signals from said memory card; and

a control circuit electrically connected to the terminals of said host apparatus for writing information to said memory card and for receiving from said terminals of said host apparatus a status signal representing the state of said switch on said memory card. --

-- 42. (New) The system of claim 41 wherein said switch has a slide member located in a recess disposed on said one surface. --

-- 43. (New) The system of claim 42 wherein said switch is reciprocally movable in a side-to-side manner toward one and away from the other of longitudinal ones of said edges, the state of said switch being determined by the position thereof. --

-- 44. (New) The system of claim 41 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a read status instruction signal from said external device to supply said status signal to said terminals. --

-- 45. (New) The system of claim 44 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a write instruction signal from said external device to write data to said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said write instruction signal. --

-- 46. (New) The system of claim 44 wherein said control circuit is responsive to an erase instruction signal from said external device to erase data stored in said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said erase instruction signal. --

-- 47. (New) The system of claim 44 wherein said data written to said storage device comprises a data file; and wherein said read status instruction signal is supplied prior to writing a data file to or erasing a data file from said storage device. --

-- 48. (New) The system of claim 41 wherein said switch is operable while said memory card is used with said external device. --

-- 49. (New) The system of claim 41 wherein said control circuit receives signals from and transmits signals to said external device in serial form. --

-- 50. (New) A system comprising:

a memory card for storing data written thereto from an external device, including:

a substantially rectangular card body having first and second substantially rectangular surfaces and edges between said surfaces;

terminals provided in the vicinity of one of the edges between said surfaces and on said first substantially rectangular surface for inputting data from or outputting data to said external device;

a storage device disposed in said card body for storing said data inputted from said terminals;

an electric switch located on one of the edges between said surfaces and operable to a state to prevent the data stored in said storage device from being erased; and

a control circuit disposed within said card body and electrically connected between said terminals and said storage device for writing data from an external device to said storage device, for reading out stored data to said terminals from said storage device and for supplying to said terminals a status signal representing the state of said switch, said control circuit being responsive to a read status instruction signal from said external device to supply said status signal to said terminals;

and said switch being electrically connected to said control circuit; and

host apparatus for receiving and communicating with said memory card, said host apparatus including:

terminals for transmitting signals to and reading this signals from said memory card; and

a control circuit electrically connected to the terminals of said host apparatus for writing information to said memory card and for receiving from said terminals of said host apparatus a status signal representing the state of said switch on said memory card. --

-- 51. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein said switch has a slide member located in a recess disposed on said one edge. --

-- 52. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein said control circuit is responsive to a write instruction signal from said external device to write data to said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said write instruction signal. --

-- 53. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein said control circuit is responsive to an erase instruction signal from said external device to erase data stored in said storage device; and wherein said read status instruction signal precedes said erase instruction signal. --

-- 54. ((New) The system of claim 50 wherein said data written to said storage device comprise a data file; and wherein said read status instruction signal is supplied prior to writing a data file to or erasing a data file from said storage device. --

-- 55. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein said switch is operable while said memory card is used with said external device. --

-- 56. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein said control circuit receives data from and transmits data to said external device in serial form. --